

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

6 MARCH 1987

Iran-Iraq War

An Iraqi commander cited by INA stated that Iraq's III Army Corps repulsed all the Iranian offensives on the southern front 4-5 March and recaptured territory from the enemy. Iraq inflicted "huge losses" on the attacking forces, which comprised four divisions supported by tanks and artillery. In earlier announcements over Voice of the Masses radio, the Iraqi command said the four Iranian divisions were "entirely annihilated" as Iraqi troops and artillery poured fire at the "scoundrels" while Iraqi aircraft destroyed "hundreds" of enemy vehicles.

In contrast, IRNA reported that Iranian forces "crushed" an Iraqi counterattack east of Basra and captured 12 tanks. As for the "Karbala'-7" offensive in the north, a communique cited by the agency said the Iranians killed 200 Iraqis in another attack, adding that the tally of POW's taken in the offensive had risen to 264.

Iran and the United States

President 'Ali Khamene'i told Friday worshippers that President Reagan was dishonest in saying that the initiative toward Iran was not originally aimed at securing the release of U.S. hostages in Lebanon, IRNA reported. Asserting that the hostage issue was very important to Reagan, Khamene'i said the U.S. President's television address shows that present American leaders "are neither honest nor do they enjoy real power."

Lebanon

President Amin al-Jumayyil's envoys presented his replies to "the formula proposed by the other party" during talks with Syrian officials in Damascus 5 March, Radio Monte Carlo reported. The radio spoke of an "extremely positive" atmosphere at the talks, with agreement reached on many points. The anticipated summit between Al-Jumayyil and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad will not be held until agreement is reached on a plan for a political solution, the radio said. In another development, Jordanian Prime Minister Zayd al-Rifa'i stated that there is "absolutely no truth" in reports that Jordan will send troops to East Beirut. Speaking in an interview published by Amman's *Al-Dustur*, he stressed that this possibility is "out of the question" and the issue "has never been discussed at any level" by the Jordanian authorities.

Reporting on the situation in West Beirut, Damascus radio noted that Syrian-Lebanese security forces stormed depots for arms and stolen property. The Beirut-Sidon coastal road is now "secure and passable for all citizens" following the 12th Brigade's deployment and the departure of "illegal armed elements," the radio added.

Libya

Protest to Turkey — The People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison summoned the Turkish ambassador to convey Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi's displeasure over the 4 March Turkish air attacks on Kurdish rebels, Tripoli television reported.

Talks With Fatah — A Fatah delegation headed by PLO deputy military commander Khalil al-Wazir held talks with Col al-Qadhafi in Sabha 4 March, Sanaa Voice of Palestine radio disclosed, noting that the two sides reviewed current Arab and Palestinian developments. The Palestinians viewed the talks as "very positive," the radio said, and they received "exceptional attention" from Libyan officials during their visit.

Involvement in Chad — In communiques broadcast by Ndjamena radio, the Chadian authorities reported fresh fighting with Libyan forces and accused Libya of infiltrating troops into Chad through Sudanese border areas.

Defectors in Egypt — Responding to Libya's claim that Egypt is preventing the crew of a Libyan C-130 return home, MENA said there is "incontrovertible proof" that the five Libyan military personnel arrived of their own free will in Egypt and voluntarily requested asylum. The agency cited a senior Egyptian information official's remark that the Libyans have not been interviewed by Egyptian media because Egypt is "not seeking a media sensation" and it wants to avoid "unnecessary tension." According to Voice of Lebanon radio, only two of the five Libyans have requested asylum in Egypt.

Israel

The U.S. secretary of defense made a "mistake" if he did indeed assert that a strong Israel cannot advance peace, Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres said in remarks broadcast by IDF radio. Peres acknowledged that the Pollard espionage case has caused a "serious" erosion of U.S.-Israeli relations and stressed the need for a "supreme effort" to overcome this problem. Israeli officials cited by Jerusalem television likewise stressed that every possible effort must now be made to improve bilateral relations and restore trust between the two countries.

Southern Sudan

The SPLA announced in a communique broadcast by its clandestine radio that SPLA forces captured the town of Pidor from government troops 4 March.

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French Foreign Minister Arrives for Visit
LD051008 Paris International Service in French
 0800 GMT 5 Mar 87

[Excerpt] Jean-Bernard Raimond has just arrived in India: New Delhi will be the first stage on the first official tour which the French minister of foreign affairs has made to Asia. When he left the plane, Jean-Bernard Raimond was welcomed by his Indian counterpart. A meeting is scheduled this morning with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The Foreign Ministry considers that this visit testifies to France's concern to reaffirm its wish to pursue a privileged dialogue with one of the leaders of the Third World. After his stay in India, Jean-Bernard Raimond will go to Japan. [passage omitted]

Meets Gandhi, Tiwari
BK041609 Delhi Domestic Service in English
 1530 GMT 5 Mar 87

[Text] The visiting French foreign minister, Mr Jean-Bernard Raimond, today discussed with Indian leaders ways and means to expand bilateral cooperation and increase the economic and commercial exchanges.

Soon after his arrival in New Delhi this morning, Mr Raimond, called on the prime minister and conveyed to him greetings from the French president, Mr Francois Mitterrand, and the prime minister, Mr Jacques Chirac.

At his detailed talks with the external affairs minister, Mr N.D. Tiwari, later the two sides considered measures to raise the level of Indian-French trade and to reduce the imbalance in it. At present the balance of trade is in favor of France.

The discussions also covered the terms and conditions of the French credit to India. It was agreed that the second Ariane satellite will be launched this year from the French Equatorial Guinea. The talks also covered the situation in South Africa and the setting up of the Africa Fund to help the Frontline States.

Attends Dinner; Views Cooperation
BK060314 Delhi Domestic Service in English
 0240 GMT 6 Mar 87

[Text] France has offered to cooperate with India in high tech areas like computers and communication systems. The French foreign minister, Mr Jean-Bernard Raimond, said in New Delhi that his country is ready for such cooperation in accordance with the priorities fixed by India. Mr Raimond was speaking at a dinner hosted in his honor by the external affairs minister, Mr N.D. Tiwari. He said France admires the immense efforts of the Indian people toward progress and development.

Welcoming the French minister, Mr Tiwari stressed the need for disarmament and hoped that world leaders would strive for eliminating conflict and confrontation. He said India greatly appreciates French assistance in economic and industrial fields.

BBC Reports Military Exercise in Rajasthan Desert
BK060102 London BBC World Service in English
 0015 GMT 6 Mar 87

[From "Radio Newsreel" program]

[Text] The Indian authorities have allowed journalists to watch a big military exercise they are holding in the northwestern Rajasthan deserts. The maneuvers, the biggest-ever held by India, involve 150,000 men. Pakistan says the maneuvers were the main cause of the crisis a month ago when both countries moved troops to the border. However, the BBC Delhi correspondent, Mark Tully, says the exercise is not a direct threat to Pakistan.

[Begin Tully recording] As we flew in helicopters over the Rajasthan desert we saw tanks and armored personnel carriers plowing through the sand. We watched Soviet-made MI-17 helicopter gunships simulating attacks on tanks, and were taken to an underground bunker to see the new (Arun) battlefield communication system with Indian hard- and software. The exercise is also testing new formations known as Rapid — they are mobile infantry divisions with armored support. Indian Army formations were based on the somewhat cumbersome World War II divisions.

Lieutenant General Prem Hun, who is commanding Operation Brass Tacks, stressed that it was never intended as a threat to Pakistan. He said we didn't want to go near the border and make anyone feel uncomfortable. The main exercise area is 200 kilometers from the Pakistan border. Gen Hun told us that some live ammunition had been issued, but he said it was only to test logistics. It is sealed, the general told us, and will remain so. Chief of Army Staff General Krishnaswamy Sudarji told us that the exercise had been delayed because of the border tension. Asked why India had moved troops to the border before trying to relieve the tension through diplomatic channels, Gen Sudarji replied: Are you seriously suggesting that we should have kept ourselves mother naked and started diplomatic parleys when Pakistan's capability to strike across our border was intact? [end recording]

PRC Stand on Arunachal Pradesh 'Unacceptable'
BK060841 Delhi Domestic Service in English
 0830 GMT 6 Mar 87

[Text] India has rejected the Chinese stand on Arunachal Pradesh as totally unacceptable. The minister of state for external affairs, Mr Eduardo Faleiro, told the Lok Sabha today in a written reply that the conferment of statehood on Arunachal Pradesh, which is an integral part of the Indian union, is entirely a matter for parliament of India to decide. The minister said the Chinese statement in this regard constitutes a clear interference in the internal affairs of India. Mr Faleiro reiterated that the government remains firmly committed to a settlement of the boundary question through peaceful negotiations with China.

Gandhi Announces Budget, Defense Allocation
BK281412 Delhi General Overseas Service in English
 1330 GMT 28 Feb 87

[Excerpt] The union budget for 1987-88 presented to Parliament today by the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, who also holds the finance portfolio, anticipates a total expenditure of 629,420 million rupees. The total receipts with existing rate of taxation have been put at 569,320 million rupees, thus leaving a gap of 60,100 million rupees. The various tax proposals are estimated to yield a net additional revenue of 3,220 million rupees. This will leave an uncovered deficit of 56,880 million rupees, which is significantly lower than the deficit in the current year.

Among the new year's budget allocations, education gets 8,000 million rupees as compared to the current year's outlay of 3,520 million rupees. The total allocation for the petroleum sector will be 32,650 million rupees. The outlay on defense has been put at 125,120 million rupees. The total nonplan expenditure in 1987-88 is estimated at 392,660 million rupees.

Gandhi Comments on Defense Spending
BK281650 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network
 in English 1600 GMT 28 Feb 87

[Text] In a comment immediately after he came out of the House, Mr Gandhi described the budget as a poor man's budget.

[Begin recording] [Reporter] In a nutshell, how would you describe your budget?

[Gandhi] For the poor, and for (?growth).

[Reporter] What effect is it likely to have on the economy?

[Gandhi] The economy will move even faster.

[Reporter] This year the budgetary deficit is the highest ever. Do you care to comment on it?

[Gandhi] It is very high, and I have made it very clear that this year we will keep very tight financial discipline and we will not allow this year's deficit to go higher than what we have shown.

[Reporter] Given the deficit, do you think we can afford to spend so much on defense?

[Gandhi] Defense is something which is essential. We cannot leave our borders unguarded. [end recording]

Finance Secretary Comments on Budget
BK010922 Delhi Domestic Service in English
 0830 GMT 1 Mar 87

[Text] The finance secretary, Mr S. Venkatarmanan, has said that the government is confident of containing the inflation and the budget proposals presented to Parliament yesterday will have a positive impact on checking the price rise. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today he said that no mass consumer item has been

touched. Capital goods like cement and electronics have been given a boost. About the budget deficit the finance secretary said that the government will be in a position to bridge the gap from internal resources. He asserted that the government will not approach the World Bank or the IMF for any structural assistance either in 1987-88 or later. He pointed out that some of the major factors that contributed to the budget deficit were relief on account of natural calamities, pay commission recommendation, food subsidy and the defense expenditure.

Replying to a question, the finance secretary said that the measures initiated earlier to unearth black money will continue. The new savings scheme will help the middle class, especially the salaried class, to enhance their savings. It was disclosed that about 4 lakh people have been brought into the income tax structure against the government's target of 6 lakhs. The finance secretary also defended the system of floating public sector bonds and the allocation for education.

'Salient' Budget Features Viewed
BK281505 Delhi Domestic Service in English
 1311 GMT 28 Feb 87

[["Special Budget Bulletin"]]

[Text] Concessions for the housing sector, incentives for savings, capital goods industries, exports, and the modernization of industries are some of the salient features of the central budget for 1987-88 presented by the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, to the Lok Sabha this evening. The budget presented by Mr Gandhi, who also holds the finance portfolio, shows a deficit 6,010 crore rupees at current rates of taxation. The new levies proposed in the budget are expected to lead to a net yield of 322 crore rupees to the center. This will leave an uncovered deficit of 5,688 crore rupees.

Mr Gandhi said the current year, 1986-87, is expected to end with a budgetary deficit of 8,285 crores.

Mr Gandhi said in line with the long-term fiscal policy he does not propose any change in the rate structure for personal and corporate taxes. To conserve foreign exchange he proposed levy of a modest tax of 15 percent on foreign exchange released in India for foreign travel. However, foreign exchange released for medical treatment and education abroad will be excluded.

Announcing incentives for new house building activities, he proposed an exemption up to 10,000 rupees a year in the income tax toward repayment of loans and payments for any new housing property. These exemptions will be within the present limit of 40,000 rupees.

The prime minister also announced that a new financial structure will be created to provide funds for housing. A new national housing bank will be set up by the Reserve Bank of India with an equity capital of 100 crore rupees to promote housing institutions at both local and regional levels.

Mr Gandhi said the MODVAT [modified value-added tariff] scheme was introduced as a major innovation last year covering

38 chapters of the excise tariff. It will now be extended to all the remaining chapters except those relating to textiles, tobacco, and the petroleum sector. He announced a number of important procedural changes to simplify the operation of MODVAT.

Mr Gandhi said the comprehensive policy package announced by the government has made electronics one of the fastest growing industries generating substantial employment. To strengthen the basic design of the present policy, he proposed several reliefs for computers. Import duty on electronic subassemblies is being reduced from 308 percent to 150 percent. The list of peripherals is being enlarged and a uniform rate of import duty of 60 percent is being specified. Import duty on specified data communication equipment is being reduced from 140 percent to 100 percent. However, import duty on specified electronic parts of computers is being increased from 25 percent to 75 percent to give appropriate protection to indigenous production.

Mr Gandhi, who is the third prime minister to present the budget after Jawaharlal Nehru in 1958 and Indira Gandhi in 1970, said the excise duty on color television sets exceeding 36 centimeter size is being raised to 1,750 rupees a set — an increase of 250 rupees. This will apply to sets whose assessable value is higher than 5,000 rupees with a retail price 7,500 rupees. It is also proposed to impose an excise duty or countervailing duty of 152 rupees on black and white tubes for size above 36 centimeters. All color television tubes will attract a duty of 600 rupees.

Turning to the needs of the common man, Mr Gandhi said plastics are widely used by them and the government proposes to initiate measures to reduce their cost. He proposed a reduction of 3,000 rupees in the basic customs duty on PVC resin per ton which is being used to manufacture cheap footwear, pipes for agricultural application, and insulation for wires and cables. The basic customs duty on low density polythene is being reduced from 100 percent to 75 percent. Excise duty on certain varieties of industrial plastics is also being reduced.

The prime minister announced that a scheme to manufacture inexpensive blended fabrics — *sulav* [cheap] fabrics — will now be extended to manufacture of *sulav* sarrees. The excise duty exemption given to footwear costing up to 45 rupees will now be applicable to products costing up to 60 rupees a pair, which will have a retail price of around a 100 rupees a pair. To offset the revenue loss, the excise on footwear exceeding this value is being increased to 15 percent for leather footwear and 20 percent on footwear of synthetic resins. *Janata* [cheaper] soaps of value not exceeding 10,900 rupees per metric ton were charged a low excise duty of 5 percent and the value limit has now been increased to 12,000 rupees per metric tons. This will reduce the cost of cheaper toilet and laundry soaps. However, expensive soaps, whose value exceeds 25,000 rupees a metric ton, will be charged 25 percent.

Mr Gandhi announced complete exemption of excise duty on shoddy woolen fabrics up to the value of 60 rupees per meter. Excise duty on fluorescent tubes is being reduced to 2 rupees a tube and other fittings and parts of such tubes will also pay reduced excise duty of 10 percent. Biogas appliances, including stoves, hot plates and lights have been completely exempted from excise duty. Items like note books, letter pads, blotting pads,

registers, account books, and file covers are also being exempted from excise duty. Specified life saving equipment, spares and accessories have been exempted from customs duty.

For cotton textiles, Mr Gandhi proposed that the small scale scheme for hand processed fabrics will be liberalized by increasing the full exemption limit from 36 lakh square meters to 50 lakh square meters. The excise duty structure on cotton fabrics in the power processing sector is being rationalized with specific rates of excise duty for fabrics of value up to 25 rupees a square meter.

Announcing incentives for new cement industry, he said that a rebate of excise duty at the rate of 50 rupees a ton will be given in respect of portland cement. Excise duty on feature films, including dubbed feature films, is to be reduced by about 10 percent.

He also proposed to reduce customs duty to 25 percent for plants and equipment needed for manufacture of family planning apparatus and appliances and also equipment using nonconventional energy sources.

Mr Gandhi said that he proposes to move over to an entirely new scheme of specific excise duty based on the length of the cigarette. Nonfilter cigarettes of size up to 70 mm would attract an excise duty of 150 rupees for 1,000 cigarettes. In the case of filter cigarettes, the excise duty will be in four slabs, and the measure will net an additional 200 crore rupees to the exchequer. The excise duty on aerated soft drinks is being increased by 20 paise [Indian coin] per bottle and in the case of soda by 15 paise. For snuff and chewing tobacco or products containing chewing tobacco, excise duty is being imposed at the rate of 25 percent.

Mr Gandhi said a new technology has been introduced in the automobile industry and production has gone up. To encourage indigenization, he proposed extension of concessional rate of customs duty for imported subcomponents to a larger list. However, excise duty on fuel-efficient motor vehicles with engine capacity not exceeding 1,000 cc is being increased from 20 percent to 25 percent.

For the handicapped, he proposed total exemption from customs duty in respect of automatic transmission and other special equipment to be fitted into fuel efficient cars of the same engine capacity.

Announcing incentives for the capital goods industry, he said there are two tariff rates for imports of machinery — 101 percent for the import of general machinery and a concessional rate of 55 percent for machinery imported for a new project. The two rates are being equalized at 85 percent and the rate of duty applicable for components will be 15 percent below the tariff rate.

To boost exports, Mr Gandhi proposed reduction of customs duty to 35 percent on additional items of tools and machinery required for the gem and the jewelry industry. The marine product industry will be allowed concessional import duty of 40 percent for 3 additional items. The leather industry can import 31 additional items of machinery at the concessional duty of 35 percent.

To benefit pensioners, he said the government has decided to increase the minimum pension and the minimum family pension to 375 rupees a month. This will benefit nearly 6 lakh pensioners.

For the welfare of workers, members of Armed Forces, and the handicapped, the prime minister proposed exemption from tax of any compensation received by employees of public sector who retired under voluntary retirement schemes. Regimental funds or nonpublic funds established to help widows of armed personnel killed in action will enjoy similar tax concessions as given to other funds like national defense fund. For the handicapped and blind, the special deduction allowed is being increased to 15,000 rupees.

To give incentives to savings, Mr Gandhi proposed a new savings scheme based on the net saving principle. Under the new scheme, 50 percent of deposits up to a maximum of 20,000 rupees will be eligible for deduction. However, in the year of withdrawal, 50 percent of the amount withdrawn will be added to taxable income.

To help agricultural labor, he said the government will appoint a national commission on rural labor to look into their working conditions.

The prime minister said public sector is the core of our industrial economy. To improve its working, the government will give it more autonomy and also bring out a white paper before Parliament.

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4 Killed in 'Terrorist' Actions in Punjab

BK051605 Delhi Domestic Service in English

1530 GMT 5 Mar 87

[Text] In Punjab, four persons were shot dead and four others seriously injured in different incidents of terrorist activities today. A couple was killed in a village in Phagwara in Kapurthala District this morning. In Hoshiarpur District a headmaster, Mr Rawail Singh, was shot dead near Bham village while on the way to his school. In Amritsar District Mahant Veer Singh was gunned down and his two companions seriously injured when terrorists fired at them at Tarn Taran. In Ropar District, a teacher, Mr Joginder Singh, was seriously injured when three armed youths attacked him within the school premises at Badali village.

Karachi Reports Geneva Talks Adjourned Until 9 Mar

*BK060225 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
0200 GMT 6 Mar 87*

[Text] Reports say that the indirect Geneva talks on Afghanistan scheduled to resume this morning have been adjourned until Monday [9 March]. It has been learned that at yesterday's indirect talks the two sides reviewed some of the new proposals presented by the UN envoy Diego Cordovez relating to changes in the stand of the two sides on the main issue of troop pullout. The negotiations have been adjourned so as to provide an opportunity to both sides to consult their governments on the new proposals.

Letter to UN Protests Afghan 'Dastardly Attacks'

*BK060245 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
0200 GMT 6 Mar 87*

[Text] Pakistan has complained to the United Nations against Afghan planes' bombing of Pakistani villages on the 26th and 27th of last month in which 90 persons were killed and 230 were wounded. In a letter to the UN secretary general, Pakistan's acting envoy at the United Nations, Anisuddin Ahmad, said that the large-scale loss of life and property resulting from these dastardly attacks was unprecedented. He said the fact that these attacks were carried out immediately after the beginning of the current indirect talks on Afghanistan in Geneva shows that the

Kabul regime is intentionally increasing tension and hampering the prospects of the talks.

'Weapons' Transactions' Result of Border Situation

*BK051618 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu
1500 GMT 5 Mar 87*

[Excerpts] The National Assembly continued its debate on the 10th constitutional amendment bill today based on the standing committee report. [passage omitted on debate details]

The Federal Minister for States and Frontier Region Syed Qasim Shah has said that the spread of sophisticated weapons has increased and in the wake of the situation created across the border, sophisticated weapons' transactions are going on in very big arms shops in the Khyber Agency. He said the government is trying to check the movement of these arms inside the country from tribal areas. [passage omitted on other House proceedings]

Syed Fakhr Imam wanted an adjournment motion on the statement of the American ambassador in which he urged Pakistan to unilaterally sign the nonproliferation treaty. Since the time for presenting the adjournment motion was over, discussion on it will be held in the next session. Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Zain Noorani opposed this motion which several other members wanted favored. The House will reconvene on Sunday morning.

SRI LANKA

LTTE 'Ideological Strength' Said Diminishing
BK051717 (Clandestine) Voice of Tamil Eelam
 in Tamil 1330 GMT 4 Mar 87

["Special announcement"]

[Text] After a very patient review and analysis over the past few months, the Communist Party of Tamil Eelam has decided to launch a new struggle and consolidate and strengthen other organizations. Unfortunately, we lack adequate military equipment and sufficient knowledge of war. Therefore, our party prefers not to indulge in military activities. However, we will lend our assistance by advising the people and the freedom fighters of Tamil Eelam and devising new measures.

Some months ago, we requested our fraternal people to support the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE]. We did so to encourage the LTTE as it was the strongest and largest organization of our Tamil Eelam, which is our life's work. However, after a long interval, we now understand that the ideological strength of the LTTE has diminished. The top leaders of the LTTE who are militarily strong do not yet understand Marxist ideology. They have not yet felt the need for a strong political character for the independent Tamil Eelam that we wish to form. It is to be noted that the Liberation Tigers who do not know the basic principles of a Marxist government have been indifferent to an important matter.

Let us look into another matter. The intelligentsia in Jaffna, especially those holding or studying for university degrees, have lagged far behind in the revolutionary struggle for Tamil Eelam. We feel that the time for them to review and take up strong political activities commensurate with the military activity has run out. It is clear that there is no use in military activities launched without an objective. The citizens of Jaffna can also exhibit great enthusiasm and vigor in the next stage of the struggle for Tamil Eelam. This is the time for our Tamil people from the north, east, and elsewhere to play their role in the freedom struggle. We will lead our struggle with the participation of the people and with the fervent political genius of the freedom fighters.

Militants Urged To 'Merge' Under Marxist Ideology
BK051159 (Clandestine) Voice of Tamil Eelam
 in Tamil 1330 GMT 3 Mar 87

[News Commentary]

[Text] [Passage indistinct] Now, besides reviewing the recent incidents, our party [Communist Party of Tamil Eelam] would like to make its stand clear.

The talks between the Sri Lankan Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam with Indian mediation appear to have been terminated. The Tigers were not really interested in the talks. The activities of the LTTE leader, Comrade Prabhakaran, after returning to Tamil Eelam give an impression of

his going away from India. There have been doubts as to whether the actions taken by the Indian Government were responsible for such a situation. In the meantime, the recent military activities undertaken by the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE in the north, east, and Mannar prove that both sides are bent only upon confrontation. This particular situation and other circumstances reflect a deviation toward the old path.

The Sri Lankan Government troops go a step further in safeguarding streets, rail tracks, and other vast areas. On the other side, the Tamil Eelam freedom fighters lie in wait to plant land mines and blast vital points on streets and rail lines. At this juncture the Sri Lankan Government troops step up their patrolling, and the freedom fighters continue their land mine offensives. The situation is similar to the one that prevailed before 1985. The Communist Party of Tamil Eelam feels that this kind of confrontation, if continued, will not be conducive to the revolution on realistic grounds and will not fulfill the needs of the hour.

We feel that the time has come for the LTTE to resort to new measures as they cannot achieve any success in their encounters with the Sri Lankan Government's security forces and we have not requested them to participate in the talks. In this connection we strongly reiterate that there will not be any future for the freedom fighters of Tamil Eelam and their leaders unless they have some maturity on political and ideological lines.

We would like to call attention to the formation of a common front by three Tamil Eelam freedom fighter organizations in the south Indian city of Madras. Although this matter surprised us a little, it should be noted that we had already suggested it. Reports from Madras say that Comrade Douglas Devananda has come forward to merge with the old EPRLF [Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front] and Comrade Easwaran's group is ready to hold talks with Comrade Uma [Uma Maheswaran of Tamil Eelam Liberation Army]. Another important fact is that a large number of TELO [Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization] members are being given special training by the Indian Army. These are matters to be meticulously reviewed. These groups can join together and function after connecting two different paths of struggle. The first one is to form an alternative political organization for the LTTE; and the second is to prepare for an encounter with it. Therefore, we are still at a loss to understand who is making plans for the Tamil Eelam struggle. At the same time, all the organizations have been engaging themselves in making them stronger. After thoughtful consideration, we would like to present an important matter. The revolutionary groups can merge under strong Marxist ideologies. The groups united by Marxist ideologies will be able to resume their struggle with new thrust.

Initially, it would not be possible for the real Marxist groups to merge with the LTTE. The behavior of the Tigers is quite puzzling. After some time it would be easy for those groups that become militarily strong to unite, become as strong as the LTTE, and carry forward the struggle against the Sri Lankan Government. Only after that, will it be possible to launch a fresh struggle

and continue with the support of the people of Tamil Eelam, keeping their various demands in view. We know that it is not easy for other revolutionary groups to hold talks or merge with the LTTE. At this juncture we request the EROS (Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students) to help us in our struggle being directed on new lines. [passage indistinct] Unfortunately, we do not have adequate military equipment or knowledge of war.

Khamene'i Delivers Friday Prayer Sermon
LD061257 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
 1030 GMT 6 Mar 87

[Text] Iran's Hezbollah, pious Islamic nation, by their presence at Friday prayers venues observed the religious-political Friday prayers rites today. Our God-fearing people also observed the Friday prayers in Tehran under the imamate of Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i at Tehran University and surrounding environs.

In his prayer sermon, Tehran's Friday imam, after glorifying the blessed days of the month of Rajab and the happy birthday anniversary of a number of immaculate imams — may peace be upon them — referred to the "Karbala'-7" offensive and the continuation of the victorious operations in the "Karbala'-5" operational theater. He said: These operations have shown that a 1200 km-border, which constitutes the battlefield, is constantly passable by Islam's combatants and that the enemy all along the front is vulnerable.

The chairman of the Supreme Defense Council emphasized: The continuation of crushing blows at the body of the Iraqi regime constitutes a riposte to Saddam's crimes in bombing our cities, our industrial and economic areas and centers, and shipping in the Persian Gulf. The world should know that these blows will continue ceaselessly and powerfully until the attainment of the final result — the fall of the Iraqi Ba'thist regime from all points along the border fronts.

Expressing anxiety at the recent incidents in Lebanon, the president of the Republic then said: Though we know that the Syrian forces' reaction to the Lebanese pious, struggling forces did not stem from the policies of the Syrian Government, but rather emanated from a decision by an individual — and we sent a message that the perpetrators of this calamity should be punished — nevertheless, unfortunately, the prestige of Syria, which has always been on the forefront of the struggle against the regime occupying Jerusalem, might become tarnished.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Khamene'i, describing the nature of relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Syria, in view of Syria's inflexible stance in regard to the regime occupying Jerusalem and its significance to the Islamic world, said: The second party to those incidents was constituted by the Lebanese pious, struggling forces who, in the past few years, have acquitted themselves very well in the struggle against Zionists. Their movement has been one of a popular nature against oppression, a movement that has always drawn our attention. In addition, experience has shown that the fight against Israel will only be crowned with victory when it enjoys a popular dimension and only reliance on the people and on popular faith could bring victory to the Muslims and the anti-Zionist forces.

In the same connection, the president of the Republic said: The Hezbollah forces have been able to impart an Islamic dimension to the fight against Israel. It was this very Islamic dimension that succeeded in pushing back the Israeli forces that had advanced up to Beirut. It was also these very Hezbollah forces that recently dealt the most blows at the Zionist and arrogant occupation forces.

The president of the Republic emphasized: We believe that the rumor of the disarming of the pious forces in Beirut is a dangerous one. If these young, pious forces were to be deprived of their weapons, who would defend Lebanon and the Islamic forces against an Israeli aggression?! Just as U.S. and Israeli policies culminated in defeat in a great many arenas, we hope that once again Western policies will be defeated there thanks to patience, common sense, and wisdom on the part of the two parties in the issue, that is, Syria and Lebanon.

Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Khamene'i, referring to the disgrace suffered by U.S. policy in relation to the Islamic Republic of Iran and Reagan's recent speech, then said:

Unfortunately, once again no veracity was detectable in this very speech, since, contrary to the remarks by the U.S. President, the plan for establishing contacts with the Islamic Republic of Iran was directly concerned with the problem of the U.S. hostages in Lebanon. Tehran's Friday imam once again emphasized: Although the issue of hostage-taking has not and does not enjoy the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran, nevertheless, the world has come to understand the fact that when hostage-taking becomes an issue, a small group of self-sacrificing people are able to stand up to the superpowers and bring them to their knees.

The president then referred to the role of the people and fighters of Afghanistan. In conclusion, the president of the Republic said: According to the draft plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kabul regime is to be eliminated. The problem of Afghanistan has nothing to do with either the USSR, Pakistan, or the Kabul regime, but rather this problem belongs to the people of Afghanistan and those fighters who have been defending their homesteads for many years now. In the draft plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the same point — the people of Afghanistan — enjoys special significance.

In conclusion, the president of the Republic added: According to the draft plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Kabul regime is to be eliminated and fighting Islamic groups can give their views on Afghanistan's future and make decisions. The three neighboring countries, that is, Iran, Pakistan, as well as the USSR, could exchange views.

Bulgaria's Khristo Bonin Continues Visit

Meets Commerce Minister
LD051121 Tehran IRNA in English 1032 GMT 5 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA — Visiting Bulgarian Minister of Metallurgy [title as received] Khristo Bonin leading a high ranking delegation met with Iranian Minister of Commerce Hasan Abedi Ja'fari here Thursday morning.

The two ministers talked on the expansion of bilateral relations, cooperation between the two sides in technical and industrial areas, as well as the exchange of commercial goods.

Khristo Bonin pointed to the visit of a Bulgarian technical and economic delegation as well as that of his country's minister of commerce to Iran last year and described his talks with Iranian

authorities as "fruitful". He added that the two countries have extensive potential for expansion of relations.

The Iranian minister of commerce said that the policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is to get rid of dependence and to expand non-oil exports. Ja'fari also called for the boosting of bilateral barter exchanges.

Views Relations With Musavi

LD051552 Tehran IRNA in English 1505 GMT 5 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA — Bulgarian Metallurgy Minister Khristo Borisov Bonin met with Prime Minister Hoseyn Musavi here Thursday.

In this meeting, Musavi noted the importance of Bulgarian familiarization with economic plans of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He also emphasized the necessity for expanding the two countries' relations.

Bonin, reporting on the progress of his negotiations in Tehran to Musavi, invited the prime minister, on behalf of his Bulgarian counterpart, to visit Bulgaria.

In response, Musavi expressed hope to visit Bulgaria at a convenient time in future.

The Bulgarian metallurgy minister arrived in Tehran Monday night, at the invitation of Iran's Minister of Mines and Metals Mohammad Reza Ayatollahi, for a three-day visit.

Holds 'Final' Talks With Ayatollahi

LD052033 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 5 Mar 87

[Text] The final round of Tehran talks between a Bulgarian delegation led by the Minister of Metallurgy Khristo Bonin, and Minister of Mines and Metals Ayatollahi was conducted this afternoon at the Ministry of Mines and Metals. Results achieved in the committees for trade, industries, and mines were studied and reviewed, and in the industries and mines sector, the following points were agreed upon:

1. Sending mineral ore samples to Bulgarian research centers for study and testing so as to obtain technical information on how to convert mineral ores into material needed by Bulgaria.
2. Sending technical reports on bentonite, ferrous oxide, and zeolite regarding their industrial use.
3. Continuing cooperation with the national copper industries of Iran in the area of copper refinement and other processes.
4. Exchanging technical information, technicians, and instructors of the industrial and research units of both countries in the mining, industrial, and metallurgical spheres.

In the trade sector, the two countries agreed to export lead concentrate, zinc and fluorine ore, and cast iron and steel billets

to Bulgaria and in return to import lead and zinc ingots, steel plate, and semimanufactured copper, brass, and aluminum products.

At the conclusion of the talks, the Bulgarian minister of metallurgy extended an invitation to Ayatollahi to pay an official visit to Bulgaria. The invitation was accepted.

Departs; Visit's Results Viewed

NC060901 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 6 Mar 87

[Text] The Central News Unit reports that the Bulgarian metallurgy minister who had come to our country at the head of a delegation left Tehran this morning after signing a note of understanding on the expansion of technical and commercial cooperation between the two countries.

Before leaving Tehran at the end of his 3-day visit to our country, the Bulgarian metallurgy minister, in an interview with our correspondent, spoke about the objectives of his visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the outcome of his talks with our country's officials.

He said: Our visit was a study and assessment of existing cooperation in the field of metallurgy, but was also aimed at finding new possibilities for the expansion of cooperation during the current and coming years. He added: Our talks were held in a very good and friendly atmosphere and were very useful. While we achieved our objectives, we also concluded that there are many favorable possibilities for the expansion of bilateral relations. The Bulgarian metallurgy minister referred to the note of understanding signed between Iran and Bulgaria, adding: The note of understanding signed by the two countries will be a new impetus for further cooperation and we will try to implement all its points.

Our country's Minister of Mines and Metals Mr Ayatollahi also spoke to our correspondent on the outcome of the visit by the Bulgarian metallurgy minister and the delegation accompanying him to Tehran. We invite you to listen to this interview:

[Begin recording][Correspondent] Mr Ayatollahi, please discuss the outcome of your talks with the Bulgarian delegation. What are the points stated in the note of understanding?

[Ayatollahi] In the name of God, the almighty. During our talks with the Bulgarian delegation headed by the Bulgarian metallurgy minister, we discussed various aspects of joint technical cooperation in the fields of mines and metallurgy, and agreements were reached. We also discussed exchanging teams of experts to share information and carry out joint technical cooperation, as well as exchanging various mineral samples for tests in a bid to study ways to introduce these into the mining industry. In addition, we discussed the sale of various metal concentrates and minerals, the purchase of similar products needed by our country, as well as non-ferrous products such as bentonite, perlite, and others. Finally, an invitation was extended by the Bulgarian metallurgy minister for a visit to Bulgaria. God willing, during this trip the note of understanding will be followed

up and ways to expand economic, commercial, and technical cooperation between the two countries will be studied.

[Correspondent] Have there been any changes as far as an increase in trade in comparison with past years is concerned?

[Ayatollahi] We have certainly introduced new aspects in this note of understanding, which includes fields that were not included in our economic cooperation thus far. This start is such that it envisages the expansion of cooperation in the future. Especially in the case of some of the minerals stated, we have started from the stage of testing and of studying these minerals for technological purposes. In other words, this can be the grounds for the creation of a very vast industry here and can lead to cooperation between the two countries in supplying both sides' needs in these fields.

[Correspondent] Thank you very much. [end recording]

Velayati Receives First SWAPO Envoy's Credentials

*LD051026 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
1630 GMT 4 Mar 87*

[Text] This afternoon (Simone Malima), who has arrived in Tehran at the head of a high-ranking delegation from the South-west African People's Organization, SWAPO, at the official invitation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's officials, met Foreign Minister Velayati and handed him a copy of the credentials of the first SWAPO ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran, as well as the written message from SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma addressed to President Khamene'i.

In this meeting Mr (Malima) expressed his appreciation and thanks for the consistent support given by the Islamic Republic of Iran to SWAPO and to the gaining of independence in all international assemblies by Namibia, and for the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran has accorded full political recognition to SWAPO.

In reply, Mr Velayati, while expressing his gladness at the SWAPO delegation's presence, accompanied by the first ambassador of the organization in the Islamic Republic of Iran, said: The Islamic Republic of Iran will continue to consistently support the struggles of the South African and Namibian nations toward the overthrow of the apartheid regime and the gaining of independence by Namibia.

Velayati Accepts Pyongyang Talks Invitation

LD051806 Tehran IRNA in English 1738 GMT 5 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA — The ambassador of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Cho Kyu-il, met Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati here Thursday and extended an invitation from his DPRK counterpart to take part in the upcoming non-aligned foreign ministers meet to be held in Pyongyang in spring this year within the framework of the South-South conference.

The DPRK envoy thanked the Islamic Republic for supporting his country's stance at the Harare summit meet of the non-aligned states.

Velayati accepted the invitation and reiterated the "friendly" ties between the two countries.

Iraqi Kurdistan Clerics Condemn Turkish 'Attack'

*NC060812 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian
0430 GMT 6 Mar 87*

[Text] The Iraqi Kurdistan Clerical Movement has issued a statement in which it condemns the recent Turkish aggressive act against a number of Kurdish-inhabited villages in Iraq, describing this aggression as a manifestation of the Baghdad rulers' incompetence.

The Central News Unit reports the statement as follows: This is not the first time the Muslim nation of Iraqi Kurdistan has been sacrificed for behind-the-scene collusions by the Ba'thists ruling Iraq, nor is it the first time its children have been tyrannically killed. This time, too, the Iraqi nation — especially the oppressed Kurdish people — has witnessed yet another criminal and deadly colonialist plot against it. Because of the attack on Iraqi sovereignty, the world now sees that there are no signs of Reagan's strong statements, no imperialist armadas sent to the area to safeguard Iraq's integrity, no signs of suspicious comings and goings by the likes of Mubarak and King Husayn, and no expressions of sympathy heard from reactionary Arab leaders: All these non-reactions show that the violation of Iraq's sovereignty is of a Western nature, and that it is thought that it can be unobstructively colonized.

Now, at this sensitive time, the Iraqi Kurdistan Clerical Movement calls on the Muslims of Iraq, and especially on the Muslim Kurds, to show perseverance and vigilance. It calls on the freedom-loving peoples of the world to judge this crime. It announces that this incident manifests the incompetence of the Baghdad rulers and proves that the Turkish Government cannot justify itself in the eyes of the world public on the basis of an agreement with the Ba'thist regime, which does not even represent the Iraqi people in any way, or by unilaterally exploiting this anti-popular agreement. The Turkish Government should know that the Iraqi regime will pass and that it is the people who will always be Turkey's neighbors. The only outcome that such acts can have is to rouse the general rage of the world's Muslims and the hostility of the Muslims of Iraq.

KEYHAN Terms 'Chaos' in U.S. Circles 'Timely'

[Editorial Report] Tehran *Keyhan* in Persian 21 and 22 February 1987, on pages 1 and 2 in both cases, carries a two-part untitled editorial on the U.S. presidency and the U.S. Congress.

The newspaper begins by noting that a "special Congressional Committee" is about to issue a report in which President Reagan is accused of making "contradictory" statements and "distorting the truth." While it may not matter if an American President tells lies, *Keyhan* writes, when the matter becomes protracted

and involved it goes beyond the person of the President, his party, and his group and calls the entire political machinery into question.

The newspaper adds that those who find themselves in the White House believe that the Congress is not "competent" to give its own views and that "the actions of White House officials, right or wrong, do not need interference from the Congress." It has been proved, according to *Keyhan*, that the White House officials often do not trust Congressmen, even though they are the people's representatives. "The fact that these officials show respect toward democratic institutions is nothing but an excuse and a cover for their own independent actions," *Keyhan* adds. The nature of the party in power makes no difference, the Tehran daily goes on. Whether Republican or Democrat, American presidents have always considered the Congress to be their political rival and have often kept the truth from Congress.

The editorial then talks about the McFarlane trip to Iran last year, which indicated "the defeat of a U.S. strategic project." The political situation inside and outside the United States became turbulent, and officials spent more time trying to solve the issue rather than getting on with other jobs, *Keyhan* adds. "The depth of this disgrace was such that many editors and U.S. theoreticians wrote articles on the National Security Council's existence, its enormous powers, and the role of the State Department and the CIA. The result of these analyses was that there had to be some changes made in the relations between the U.S. Administration and the Congress."

Iranian disclosures on the U.S. efforts to make contact with Tehran officials, according to *Keyhan*, provided a good excuse to "drag the U.S. Administration's blunders inside that country." "The first crisis occurred soon after the disclosure of McFarlane's trip to Iran and Reagan's confirmation of the defeat of his plans with regard to establishing contacts with Iran. The scandal over the release of hostages in exchange for arms clearly showed the weakness of the U.S. Administration in making sound and effective decisions," *Keyhan* adds.

A "second crisis" allegedly came about when White House officials "distorted the truth when confronting the Congress and the American people." This caused the people to lose their trust in their government and caused the administration to lose its credibility within its own country, the editorial continues.

"If officials of the Islamic Republic had shown any kind of inclination toward the U.S. officials' wishes, or if they had at least remained silent, nothing would have happened and the U.S. political situation would not have been so disrupted," *Keyhan* goes on. No one would have questioned the President's ability to govern, no one would have resigned, and no one would have tried to commit suicide."

"Whether or not Reagan can last until the end of his term is important but not vital, because the President and his administration have lost credibility to such an extent that they are in effect unable to guide the country's policies," according to *Keyhan*. The Americans panicked to such an extent, the newspaper adds, that they tried to drag in other countries such as Israel,

Denmark, Portugal, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and even Turkey, but this only "worsened the crisis."

In their panic, the Americans even admitted to their financial help for Iranian counterrevolutionaries living abroad, the editorial asserts.

"In any event, the timely Iranian action in causing chaos within U.S. political circles was a successful experience which showed the vulnerability of the White House. The situation is still pregnant with possibilities and gives Iranian officials a good opportunity to continue this political struggle and to keep the upper hand in propaganda affairs," *Keyhan* concludes. What has been said so far by the Iranians is not enough: A committee should be formed to study the effects of this crisis on U.S. political circles and assist Iranian officials by pointing out weak points. "Just as the enemy forms similar committees to study various conditions, we also need research and further study in this area, and this is something that cannot be handled by government agencies alone."

Terms Tower Commission Report 'Lies'

[Editorial Report] Tehran *Keyhan* in Persian 28 February and 1 March 1987 carries, on pages 1 and 2 in both issues, a two-part editorial on the Tower Commission report. The paper writes that the damage caused to the U.S. Administration as a result of the report, published after weeks of anticipation, is irreparable.

"The first official victim of the report is White House Chief of Staff Donald Regan, who was considered the number two man in the U.S. Administration. In order to hide other truths, the Tower Commission has been forced to accuse Regan of undue meddling in the country's affairs and to blame him first and foremost for the chaos at the White House," *Keyhan* writes.

Despite its good intentions, the Tower Report has been forced to admit that the U.S. President is no longer capable of managing the nation or indeed the different offices at the White House, according to the Tehran newspaper. "The Tower report also includes another important result, although this one is not mentioned in its text directly, and that is a complete victory for the Islamic Republic of Iran. Published research indicates that Islamic Republic officials followed a wise and aware policy and imposed a deep crisis on the White House and inside the United States."

"Iran has said many times," *Keyhan* goes on, "that the real losers in the arms for hostages deal are the United States and Reagan himself, despite the fact that the White House has always repudiated the arms sales reports and denied giving bribes for the release of its nationals held captive in Lebanon."

Keyhan condemns the Tower Commission report as "a huge treason" against its mission: "We suggest that a special commission be formed to look into the cover-up and the conservative attitudes in the Tower Report. It has to be made clear how the commission members diplomatically and subtly avoided reaching cohesive conclusions and tried to rescue the main element of the White House scandals and put all the blame on Reagan's advis-

ers." It is clear that what the commission wanted to achieve was to return the White House to normalcy and preserve U.S. "democratic prestige," according to the newspaper.

"In order to lessen the pressures and in an effort to show unity with the commission, the night before the report was published Reagan issued a statement to the effect that the United States is duty-bound to maintain peace and security in the Persian Gulf nations. Immediately after this he said that he would take some steps to improve the situation. But who can doubt that the best step he could take would be his own departure from the White House?" *Keyhan* goes on.

In another part of the report, *Keyhan* observes, the Tower Commission is forced to admit that arms were exchanged for hostages — "something that so far White House officials have been loath to admit." "This caused a loss of face for the United States, at home and among its friends abroad," the newspaper claims. "One can make a guess about the Report's truthfulness by taking a look at the complete lies included in the Report, such as Israel's involvement in the McFarlane affair." "Every time the United States wants to start a psychological war against Iran, it immediately brings Israel's name into the piece. It is obvious that this is one of the peculiarities of democracy, American-style!" according to the newspaper.

Even if some parts of the report are neutral, who is going to pay for the mistakes? *Keyhan* asks. "Will the problems be solved by resignations? Then what is the American judicial system for? How can a president, whose incompetence in managing the country is infamous, stay in power?" it adds. According to the paper, "Reagan's hypocrisy" became clear when his special envoy in Frankfurt admitted that Iran is the final victor in the Gulf war and that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn has to go; but then Reagan himself, the night before the publication of the Tower Report, tried to breathe some hope into the "regional reactionaries" by expressing support for the Iraqi regime.

"This is exactly what the United States did about the hostages, and then denied it. Finally, in order to calm its friends, it sent Shultz to far-off places to stop arms sales to Iran. In the United States, everything is based on lies — even the Tower Report," *Keyhan* asserts.

The newspaper then adds: "The behavior of some leaders of countries who are supposed to be against the United States is also surprising. In the midst of this mess and the daily-increasing chaos at the White House, they suggest the removal of intermediate nuclear missiles from Europe, in order to overwhelm European public opinion and take advantage of the general atmosphere in the mass media.

"In any case, whatever happens, the fact remains that the varying decisions at the White House are causing a loss of status for the United States throughout the world," *Keyhan* concludes.

KEYHAN Comments on Syrian Troops in Beirut PM051205 Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 25 Feb 87 pp 1-2

[Editorial: "Reciprocal Security Link Between Lebanon and Syria]

[Text] Following an increase in Lebanon's internal strife, Syria decided to deploy 7,000 of its troops in West Beirut. This task was accomplished just a few days ago. Syrian officials say that the move was undertaken at the request and invitation of various belligerent Lebanese groups.

Although the deployment of Syrian troops in West Beirut has been met with silence in regional circles, it provokes special sensitivity and has encountered various reactions.

Syria has always expected the Lebanese people, groups, and political parties to act in such a way as not to endanger that country's interests in the region, especially in Lebanon. Syrian officials have always wanted to be considered the key to all regional political problems, especially those involving Lebanon, and they have always wanted to be considered as one side in any negotiations.

Naturally, the internal strife in Lebanon is comforting to Israel. Hostility among the Muslim Lebanese groups removes the only serious factor against Zionism and Israel. It is precisely because of this that the world's Muslims and the progressive Islamic forces have always wanted peace and security in Lebanon. The officials of the Islamic Republic have announced many times that all the Muslim Lebanese groups must unify their military might to strike blows against Israeli interests, so as not to allow the criminal enemy to take liberties.

Without a doubt peace and security in Lebanon would also generate stability in Syria, and there is a reciprocal link between political stability in Syria and peace and security in Lebanon.

Henry Kissinger, the American foreign policy analyst, once said: The Arabs cannot fight without Egypt and they cannot make peace without Syria. But we say that the Arabs in general cannot have peace and stability without Syria. Syria's strategic role in preventing Israeli aggression and expansionist dreams serves as a security shield for the Arab world, and this is a fact that is not lost on anyone. Perhaps it can honestly be said that at present Syria is the only country that can be considered as confronting Israel along Israel's frontiers.

Neighboring countries such as Egypt and Jordan and other Arab reactionary states behind the war fronts against Israel have gone after making political deals with Tel Aviv and kissing feet in the White House. They only talk about peaceful coexistence and overall peace in the region.

This is why, when Syria involves its troops in Lebanon's internal problems, Israel is beside itself and does nothing to hide its joy. U.S. officials also express satisfaction at this development. The division of Syrian forces and their preoccupation with side-issues means peace of mind for those who have until now considered Syria their enemy.

One cannot disregard Syria's role in bringing stability and security to Lebanon. We also recognize this fact; but whether this security should be gained with the help of Syrian political and cultural forces and be lasting, or whether it must be accomplished by force, is something that has to be discussed further.

Another important point we must discuss right here is the Lebanese Hezbollah. Among the combatant Lebanese groups, Hezbollah, before being a group or body, is an Islamic and nationalist movement that has risen from the depths of the impoverished Lebanese Muslim masses. Hezbollah is the fruit of the struggle of men and women who are fighting bravely for their people's independence and liberty. They have revolted in order to establish the Islamic, nationalist regime which has become the wish of the Lebanese people.

The ideals manifested by Hezbollah and the slogans on which it insists will not disappear. The Iranian [as published] people will not accept any kind of indifference toward or weakening of these principles.

The Syrian troops have exercised the utmost caution when confronting Muslim Lebanese groups such as the Amal or the Druze, but unfortunately it seems that some Syrian soldiers disobeyed orders and massacred a number of these warriors in the same Muslim neighborhood that reared these brave young men.

We are sure that these erring soldiers never considered their own people or their government's interests. Because Syria, of course, knows better than anyone else that the Hezbollah is one of the most important foundations in Lebanon's political arena. It knows about Hezbollah's very important and strategic role.

A mistake by one military unit will not force us to change our minds about Damascus' anti-Zionist principles. We believe in and defend the idea that Syrian guns and bayonets must be used to tear apart the bodies of Israeli soldiers. We also recognize Syria's existence as the Islamic world's first shield of defense against Zionism.

Reportage on Combat Operations in War With Iraq

Communique No 2,766

LD051714 Tehran IRNA in English 1708 GMT 5 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 5, IRNA — Three Iraqi counteroffensives to retake the strategic height 2,519 in the "Karbala'-7" operational theater, around Hajj 'Umrān, were smashed by Iranian forces Wednesday night and Thursday as a result of which the enemy was forced to retreat, suffering substantial casualties and losses.

Announcing the above Thursday, the 2766th communique of the Joint Staff Command of Iran's Armed Forces said that 60 to 70 percent of two battalions of Brigade 3 of Iraq's 25th Division and 70 percent of a commando battalion of the enemy 23d Division were destroyed in the smashed counterattacks.

Twenty-nine Iraqi soldiers were captured and a large amount of enemy military equipment, including eight tanks was seized intact by Iranian forces in the aborted counterattacks.

In continuation of the successful "Karbala'-7" operations, the Iranian forces stormed Iraqi positions at Shohada (martyrs) height in the battlefield Wednesday night, killing at least 200 enemy soldiers and capturing 15 others.

The number of Iraqi POW's captured and transferred to safe places behind the fronts in the "Karbala'-7" theatre has so far reached 264.

Meanwhile, an Iraqi Sukhoi-22 jet was shot down by anti-aircraft fire of the Iranian Muslim combatants east of Basra at 09:44 GMT Thursday.

A large number of Iraqi munitions dumps in the "Karbala'-5" operational region were set ablaze and destroyed by heavy Iranian artillery fire.

Iranian Gendarmerie forces reconnoitered and shelled Iraqi positions in the southern fronts Wednesday, destroying 10 enemy bunkers, one munitions dump, and several vehicles.

Iraqi forces also sustained heavy casualties and losses in the Marivan theatre, northwestern fronts, Wednesday.

Several Iraqi gun emplacements and observation posts were destroyed and one enemy munitions dump set afire in the western fronts in artillery duels with Iranian forces Wednesday.

Iranian artillery fire on Iraqi armoured units in the southern fronts on Wednesday inflicted heavy casualties and damage on enemy troops, the communique concluded.

Forces Continue To Advance

LD061115 Tehran IRNA in English 1111 GMT 6 Mar 87

[Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA — In the ongoing victorious "Karbala'-7" operations in Hajj 'Umrān region, Iran's Muslim forces are continuing to advance and strengthen their positions, according to latest reports reaching here from Khatem ol-Anbiya' Hqs.

In heavy battle with enemy troops in the operational region Thursday night, the Muslim combatants of Iran destroyed by 50 percent Tank Battalion 42 from the 80th Armored Brigade of the Iraqi Army. They killed another group of enemy troops in this operation and took 11 more captive. This brings to 270 the number of enemy POW's captured since the operations started Tuesday.

Also eight enemy tanks, 10 anti-aircraft weapons of 57 mm and 23 mm caliber as well as a considerable number of grenade launchers, some 60 mm and 82 mm artillery shells and RPG-11's were seized from the enemy troops and immediately employed against the Iraqis. Despite heavy snow and the extremely cold weather, fierce battles are raging in the operational theater.

Forces Placed in 'Vantage Position'*LD061344 Tehran IRNA in English 1258 GMT 6 Mar 87*

[Text] Orumiyeh, March 6, IRNA — Commander of the 64th army of Orumiyeh said in an interview to IRNA here Friday that the successful thrust by Iran's Muslim forces into Iraqi soil at Hajj 'Umran Tuesday night has placed the Iranian forces in a vantage position for any large-scale operation in the future.

He said in less than 20 minutes after the thrust the Iranian forces had heavily pounded Iraqi positions and shattered breastworks and other strongholds of the enemy forces and advanced to new positions.

The Iranian commander said within a very short time from the zero hour, Iran's Muslim combatants pushed back Iraq's 75th Infantry Brigade and inflicted heavy damage upon its Brigades Number 604, 96, and 93 and also Brigade Number Three of 25th Army which had been dispatched to the theater from other areas in a hasty manner.

The commander of the army said in the wake of the encounter at least 2,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed or injured and that 275 of them had been taken prisoner.

He said also that eight tanks, ten anti-aircraft guns of 57 and 23 millimeter category had been seized intact by the Iranian forces. Among other spoils of war, he said, were a considerable haul of machine guns, grenade launchers, various models of 60 and 82-millimeter mortar launchers, and some rocket-propelled grenades.

Meanwhile Iraqi soldiers and military commanders taken prisoner in the course of the "Karbala'-7" operations Tuesday night said to IRNA here Friday that they had been dumbfounded at the lightning strike of the Iranian forces.

Addressing themselves to the rank and file members of the Iraqi Armed Forces in an interview with IRNA, they called on them to surrender to Iran's Muslim forces instead of allowing themselves to fall 'prey into the hands of Saddam Husayn'. The Iraqi prisoners of war said invariably that the nice treatment with them by their Iranian captors had disproved Saddam's propaganda against the Iranian forces.

Iraqi Second Lieutenant Salman Fareth of the Second Battalion of Iraq's Fifth Corps said to IRNA here that the surprise attack of the Iranian forces had utterly disarrayed the battalion's personnel at the "Karbala'-7" operations and that the entirety of soldiers under his command had been either killed or captured by the Iranian forces.

Sergeant Major Najah Hassan Najah of the Second Battalion of 604th Brigade said that the lightning attacks of Iranians since "Karbala'-5" operations have sharply demoralized the rank and file of Iraqi Armed Forces and that Iraqi officers and soldiers largely await an opportunity for surrendering themselves or defecting to the Iranian forces.

"Karbala' 5" Enemy Positions 'Pounded'*LD061103 Tehran IRNA in English 1057 GMT 6 Mar 87*

[Text] Tehran, March 6, IRNA — Jet fighters of the Islamic Republic Air Force heavily pounded enemy positions and fortifications as well as a number of munitions depots in "Karbala'-5" operational theater, at 06:12 and 07:33 GMT Friday.

According to the Joint Staff Command of the Armed Forces, the Iranian fighters all returned to bases safely after inflicting heavy losses and damage on the enemy troops.